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12 April 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Minutes of the Clandestine Service
Historical Board Meeting, 5 Apr 1971,
1000 to 1200 Hours, Room 2E-49 Hqs.

Present: 25X1A9a

Mr. Hugh T. Cunningham, Chairman
Mr. [REDACTED], Member
Mr. [REDACTED], Secretary
Mr. [REDACTED], representing OPSER/DDP
Prof. Howard M. Ehrmann, C/CIA/HS, Guest
Dr. [REDACTED], DC/CIA/HS, Guest

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Mr. John Caswell, Board Member, was absent
serving on a personnel panel.

1. The meeting was called to review the status of the CS Historical Program and to discuss among members of the Board and with Professor Ehrmann some of the problems involved, and possible solutions.

2. Mr. Cunningham had just come from a 20 minute meeting with Col. White in the course of which the program was discussed. Col. White recognized that the program was too extensive for the CS to complete by the 31 December 1971 deadline, given other priorities and personnel reductions. He urged, however, that pressure be continued to accomplish the maximum possible during the year and to complete the present phase of the program as soon as possible.

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3. The type of histories to be scheduled in the continuing CS Program was discussed briefly. Mr. Cunningham urged increased attention to the CIA/CS role in certain area problems cutting across station lines. He pointed out that station histories reflect a fragmented view of overall CIA policy, operations and accomplishments. Prof. Ehrmann expressed the view that this should not be an "either/or" matter but that a balance should be reached between the two types of papers.

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4. It was agreed that acquisition of competent writing personnel was the key to completion of the program at an early date. Further, that the pace of the program could not be maintained or accelerated unless Agency policy regarding delay of retirement or re-hiring of annuitants can be relaxed to accommodate the historical program. Mr. [REDACTED] affirmed that he would support efforts to adjust retirement and contract policies to our needs. Mr. [REDACTED] also pointed out that a further CS ceiling reduction of 130 slots by the end of the fiscal year would make it particularly difficult otherwise for the CS and CS components to make personnel available for the historical program.

5. Professor Ehrmann expressed the hope that members of the CS Historical Board would be able to play a more active role in reviewing and critiquing CS draft histories, as is done in other directorates.

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6. Status of the overall DDP histories was reviewed. Consideration will be given to forming a "task force" comprising an experienced and competent researcher-writer working together with three or four experienced and senior CS officers to provide consultation and guidance. Mr. Cunningham pointed out that if research on the DDP histories were completed in the course of the year, and the documents identified and assembled they could be set aside until such time as a qualified writer becomes available. The same would apply to other component histories. The possibility of assigning Mr. [REDACTED] of FI/D to write overall DDP history was considered but no decision was taken.

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7. Mr. [REDACTED] raised the question as to whether overall DDP history need - or should be written. 'Perhaps it should remain behind its veil of secrecy and mystery.' Professor Ehrmann pointed out that a paucity of information on the DDP characterized the various overall Agency histories written in the past and that it is essential that these gaps be filled in those now in preparation or projected.

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8. Mr. Cunningham specified initial and immediate tasks for the overall CS Program: (a) make an exhaustive search for and assemble all [REDACTED] correspondence; (b) locate and collect documents relating to the three periods of DDP history.

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9. Mr. [REDACTED] cited the lack of knowledge revealed by two writers who recently interviewed him concerning the early history of [REDACTED] Stations. He questioned their ability to prepare useful or suitable histories.

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10. It was suggested that Mr. [REDACTED] assist in identifying capable researchers and writers and in making them available for the historical [REDACTED] Mr. [REDACTED] will consult [REDACTED] who, while serving with [REDACTED] boards, may be able to steer us to qualified personnel. 25X1A9a

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11. There was a discussion as to the advantages of structural versus personal historical accounts. Mr. [REDACTED] felt the structural approach to be generally dry and uninteresting. Personal accounts, while sometimes overlapping and contradictory, could often be more interesting and revealing.

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[REDACTED]
Executive Secretary
CS Historical Board

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